

HOUSE BILL 2495

By Clemmons

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4, Chapter 29; Title 4, Chapter 3, Part 2; Title 39; Title 43; Title 53, Chapter 11; Title 63 and Title 68, to enact the "Sherry Jones Medical Cannabis Access Act."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 68, is amended by adding Sections 2 through 9 as a new chapter.

SECTION 2. This chapter is known and may be cited as the "Sherry Jones Medical Cannabis Access Act."

SECTION 3. As used in this chapter, unless the context requires otherwise:

(1) "Cannabis" means the dried flowers of the female cannabis plant or any mixture or preparation of the flowers, but does not include seeds, stalks, leaves, or roots of the plant;

(2) "Cardholder" means a qualifying patient who:

(A) Has been diagnosed with a qualifying medical condition by a practitioner;

(B) Has been certified for participation in the safe access program; and

(C) Possesses a valid program identification card;

(3) "Caregiver" means a person who provides personal care, support, or assistance to a qualifying patient, including, but not limited to, a parent or legal guardian of a qualifying patient who is a minor;

(4) "Licensed processor" means an entity licensed and registered under Section 7 that processes, packages, and delivers medical cannabis or related supplies and educational materials to participating pharmacies or regulated dispensaries;

(5) "Licensed producer" means an entity licensed and registered under Section 7 that possesses, cultivates, processes, manufactures, and delivers medical cannabis or related supplies and educational materials to licensed processors;

(6) "Medical use" means the acquisition, possession, use, or transportation of cannabis or paraphernalia relating to the consumption of cannabis to alleviate a registered patient's qualifying medical condition or its symptoms;

(7) "Minor" means a person younger than eighteen (18) years of age;

(8) "Participating pharmacy" means a licensed pharmacy in this state that applies to be a direct provider of medical cannabis to safe access program cardholders;

(9) "Practitioner" means a person who is licensed with authority to prescribe drugs pursuant to title 63, chapter 7 or 19, or a physician licensed with authority to prescribe drugs in this state under title 63, chapter 6 or 9;

(10) "Program" means the safe access program as administered or regulated by the department of agriculture, department of health, and the board of pharmacy or any entity authorized to administer the safe access program pursuant to a rule promulgated by the department of agriculture, department of health, or board of pharmacy in accordance with the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, compiled in title 4, chapter 5;

(11) "Program identification card" means a document issued by a participating pharmacy or regulated dispensary that identifies a person as a registered qualifying patient in the safe access program;

(12) "Qualifying medical condition" means:

- (A) Cancer;
- (B) Glaucoma;
- (C) Multiple sclerosis (MS);
- (D) Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS);
- (E) Hepatitis C (HCV);
- (F) Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS);
- (G) Crohn's disease;
- (H) Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD); or
- (I) Alzheimer's disease;
- (J) A chronic or debilitating disease or medical condition or its treatment that produces one (1) or more of the following:
  - (i) Cachexia or wasting syndrome;
  - (ii) Severe, debilitating, chronic pain;
  - (iii) Severe nausea;
  - (iv) Seizures, including, but not limited to, those characteristic of epilepsy; or
  - (v) Severe and persistent muscle spasms, including, but not limited to, those characteristic of a spinal cord injury or nerve damage;
- (K) A medical condition for which a patient receives hospice services, as defined in § 68-11-201; or
- (L) Another medical condition or its treatment as certified or prescribed by a practitioner and approved by the department of health;

(13) "Qualifying patient" means a person who has been diagnosed with a qualifying medical condition by a practitioner and is a resident of Tennessee, except as provided in Section 4(i), or the person's designated and registered caregiver;

(14) "Registry identification card" means a program identification document issued to a principal officer, board member, agent, volunteer, or employee of a licensed producer or processor;

(15) "Regulated dispensary" means an entity that has been established to dispense medical cannabis from the safe access program to eligible Tennessee patients in the absence of distribution through participating pharmacies and in accordance with rules promulgated under the authority of this chapter by the department of health;

(16) "Resident of Tennessee" means a person who is a resident as defined in § 71-5-103; and

(17) "Safe access program enrollment" means that a qualifying patient has received a certification for medical cannabis from a practitioner and complied with Section 5(a) of this act.

#### SECTION 4.

(a) A qualifying patient who possesses a program identification card shall not be subject to arrest, prosecution, or penalty in any manner or denied any right or privilege, including, but not limited to, a civil penalty or disciplinary action by a business or an occupational or professional licensing board or commission for the medical use of cannabis; provided, that the qualifying patient is enrolled in the safe access program.

(b) A school, employer, or landlord shall not refuse to enroll, employ, or lease to or otherwise penalize a person solely for the person's status as a cardholder.

(c) A registered qualifying patient may possess a reasonable amount of cannabis, not to exceed one (1) month's supply, as determined by the patient's practitioner.

(d)

(1) There exists a rebuttable presumption that a qualifying patient is engaged in the medical use of cannabis if the qualifying patient:

(A) Is in possession of a program identification card; and

(B) Is in possession of an amount of cannabis that does not exceed the amount permitted under this chapter.

(2) The presumption may be rebutted by evidence that conduct related to cannabis was not for the purpose of alleviating the qualifying patient's qualifying medical condition or symptoms associated with the medical condition.

(e) A practitioner shall not be subject to arrest, prosecution, or penalty in any manner or denied any right or privilege, including, but not limited to, civil penalty or disciplinary action by the board of medical examiners or by a business or an occupational or professional licensing board or commission of this state solely for providing written certifications or for otherwise stating that, in the practitioner's professional opinion, the potential benefits of medical cannabis would likely outweigh the health risks for a qualifying patient.

(f) Any interest in or right to property that is possessed, owned, or used in connection with the medical use of cannabis, or acts incidental to such use, shall not be forfeited.

(g) A person shall not be subject to arrest or prosecution for constructive possession, conspiracy, aiding and abetting, being an accessory, or any other offense for simply being in the presence or vicinity of the medical use of cannabis as permitted

under this chapter or for assisting a registered safe access program patient with using or administering medical cannabis.

(h) A practitioner, nurse, or pharmacist shall not be subject to arrest, prosecution, or penalty in any manner or denied any right or privilege, including, but not limited to, civil penalty or disciplinary action by a business or an occupational or professional licensing board or commission solely for discussing the benefits or health risks of medical cannabis or its interaction with other substances with a patient or for providing certification of a patient's eligibility for the safe access program to participating pharmacies or regulated dispensaries.

(i) A program identification card or its equivalent issued under the laws of another state, United States territory, or the District of Columbia to permit the medical use of cannabis by a patient with a qualifying medical condition, or to permit a person to assist with the medical use of cannabis by a patient with a qualifying medical condition, shall not have the same force and effect as a program identification card. An out-of-state patient must be evaluated and certified for safe access program participation by a practitioner licensed and qualified to do so in this state in order to obtain medical cannabis from the safe access program.

(j) For purposes of medical care, including organ transplants, a registered qualifying patient's authorized use of cannabis is considered the equivalent of the authorized use of any other medication used at the direction of a physician and does not constitute the use of an illicit substance.

## SECTION 5.

(a) Enrollment in the safe access program must be conducted at participating pharmacies and regulated dispensaries. For a qualifying patient to be enrolled in the program:

(1) The qualifying patient's practitioner, with whom the patient has a bona fide patient-practitioner relationship, shall complete a full assessment of the qualifying patient's medical history;

(2) The qualifying patient's practitioner shall specify the qualifying patient's qualifying medical condition or conditions and state that in the practitioner's professional opinion the potential benefits of the medical use of cannabis would likely outweigh the health risks for the qualifying patient; and

(3) The certification and safe access program enrollment completed at the participating pharmacy or regulated dispensary must certify the qualifying patient's qualifying medical condition or conditions.

(b) The program shall issue program identification cards to qualifying patients who receive a certification for medical cannabis and complete the safe access program enrollment process at a participating pharmacy or regulated dispensary. Patients shall provide the following information to the safe access program:

(1) Name, address, and date of birth of the qualifying patient; provided, however, that if the patient is homeless, no address is required; and

(2) Name, address, and telephone number of the qualifying patient's practitioner.

(c) The program shall not issue a program identification card to a qualifying patient who is a minor unless:

(1) The qualifying patient's practitioner has explained the potential risks and benefits of the medical use of cannabis to the qualifying patient and to a parent, guardian, or person having legal custody of the qualifying patient; and

(2) The parent, guardian, or person having legal custody consents in writing to:

- (A) Allow the qualifying patient's medical use of cannabis; and
- (B) Control the acquisition of the cannabis, the dosage, and the frequency of the medical use of cannabis by the qualifying patient.

(d)

(1) The program shall verify the information contained in a safe access program application or renewal submitted pursuant to this section and shall approve or deny an application or renewal within thirty (30) days of receiving the application or renewal.

(2) The program shall deny a safe access program application or renewal only if the applicant did not provide the information required pursuant to this section or if the program determines that the information provided was falsified.

(3) Rejection of a safe access program application or renewal is considered a final program action, subject to judicial review.

(4) Jurisdiction and venue for judicial review are vested in the chancery court of Davidson County.

(e) The program shall issue a program identification card at the time of enrollment into the program, which expires no later than one (1) year after the date of issuance.

(f) Program identification cards must contain:

- (1) The date of issuance and expiration date of the identification card;
- (2) A random program identification number; and
- (3) Any additional information as required by rule or the program.

(g) A person who is issued a program identification card is subject to the following:



(1) A qualifying patient who has been issued a program identification card shall notify the patient's practitioner of any change in the patient's name or address or if the patient ceases to have the patient's qualifying medical condition within thirty (30) days of such change;

(2) A registered qualifying patient who fails to notify the patient's practitioner of any changes requiring notification is subject to a civil penalty of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00). If the patient ceases to suffer from a qualifying medical condition, then the card is deemed void, and the patient is liable for any other penalties that may apply to the patient's nonmedical use of cannabis;

(3) When a qualifying patient notifies the patient's practitioner of any changes listed in this subsection (g), the practitioner shall issue the patient a certification to be used to update safe access program information with the participating pharmacy or regulated dispensary;

(4) When a qualifying patient who possesses a program identification card changes practitioners, the new practitioner shall assume responsibility for the patient's safe access program participation and issue a new certification to update the patient's safe access program information to reflect the change. No more than one (1) certification from one (1) practitioner is allowed for safe access participants;

(5) If a cardholder's program identification card is lost or stolen, then the cardholder shall notify the participating pharmacy or regulated dispensary and submit a fee of ten dollars (\$10.00) to receive a replacement card; and

(6) If a cardholder knowingly violates any provision of this chapter as determined by the program, the program identification card may be revoked.

(h) Possession of or application for a program identification card shall not constitute probable cause or reasonable suspicion nor shall it be used to support the search of the person or property of the person possessing or applying for the program identification card nor otherwise subject the person or property of the person to inspection by any governmental agency.

(i)

(1) A program identification card and the supporting information submitted by a qualifying patient, including information regarding the patient's practitioner, is confidential and protected under the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 104-191), as amended.

(2) The program shall maintain a confidential list of safe access program participants whose practitioners have certified them in the program and to whom the program has issued program identification cards. Individual names and other identifying information on the list are considered confidential and exempt from the public record provisions of title 10, chapter 7, part 5, and are not subject to disclosure, except to authorized employees of the program as necessary to perform official duties of the program.

(j) The program shall verify to law enforcement personnel whether a program identification card is valid solely by confirming the program identification number.

(k)

(1) A person, including an employee or official of the program or its licensees or another state agency or local government, who knowingly breaches the confidentiality of information obtained pursuant to this chapter commits a Class B misdemeanor, punishable only by a fine of one thousand dollars (\$1,000).

(2) Notwithstanding subdivision (k)(1), a safe access program employee may notify law enforcement about falsified or fraudulent information submitted to the program.

(l) On or before January 31 of each even-numbered year, beginning in 2024, the department of health, department of agriculture, and board of pharmacy shall report to the general assembly on the performance of the safe access program. The report must provide the following:

- (1) The number of patients enrolled in the safe access program;
- (2) The natures of the qualifying medical conditions of the patients;
- (3) The number of practitioners providing safe access program certification for qualifying patients;
- (4) An evaluation of the costs and benefits of the safe access program for patients, practitioners, and the general public, including any costs and benefits to law enforcement agencies, the courts, and hospitals;
- (5) Statistics regarding the number of cannabis-related prosecutions against registered patients and caregivers and an analysis of the facts underlying those prosecutions;
- (6) Statistics regarding the number of prosecutions against practitioners for violations of this chapter; and
- (7) Updates on national policy and practice regarding the access of qualified patients to medical cannabis.

(m) The application for a qualifying patient's program identification card must include a statement indicating that the program may contact the patient to obtain information about safe access program participation, including experiences with using

medical cannabis, in a systematic effort to inform future safe access program policies and practices.

#### SECTION 6.

(a) A person shall not:

(1) Undertake any task under the influence of cannabis when doing so would constitute negligence or professional malpractice;

(2) Use cannabis:

(A) On public transportation;

(B) On school grounds;

(C) In a correctional facility;

(D) In a public place;

(E) In a licensed substance abuse treatment facility in this state;

or

(F) Where exposure to cannabis significantly and adversely affects the health, safety, or welfare of children; or

(3) Operate, navigate, or be in actual physical control of any motor vehicle, aircraft, or vessel subject to registration while under the influence of cannabis. However, a registered qualifying patient shall not be considered to be under the influence solely for having cannabis metabolites in the patient's system.

(b) This chapter does not require:

(1) A government medical assistance program or private health insurer to reimburse a person for costs associated with the medical use of cannabis; or

(2) An employer to accommodate medical cannabis in the workplace.

(c) A person who makes a fraudulent representation of any fact or circumstance relating to the medical use of cannabis to a law enforcement official to avoid arrest or prosecution commits a Class C misdemeanor.

#### SECTION 7.

(a) A licensed producer registered under this section may possess, cultivate, harvest, and deliver cannabis or related products to a licensed processor. The department of agriculture shall regulate licensed producers.

(b) A licensed processor registered under this section may possess, process, package, and deliver cannabis or related products to participating pharmacies and regulated dispensaries. The department of agriculture shall regulate licensed processors.

(c)

(1) A participating pharmacy or a regulated dispensary is the point of distribution of medical cannabis to safe access program participants.

(2) The board of pharmacy shall regulate participating pharmacies.

(3) The department of health shall regulate dispensaries.

(4) Except as specifically provided to the contrary, this chapter applies to licensed producers, licensed processors, participating pharmacies, and regulated dispensaries.

(d)

(1) No later than one hundred twenty (120) days after the effective date of this act, the commissioner of health, the commissioner of agriculture, and the board of pharmacy shall promulgate rules governing the consideration of applications and qualifications of applicants for registration certificates for

licensed producers, licensed processors, participating pharmacies, and regulated dispensaries, including:

- (A) The form and content of registration and renewal applications;
- (B) Minimum oversight requirements for these entities;
- (C) Minimum record-keeping requirements for these entities;
- (D) Minimum security requirements for these entities; and
- (E) Procedures for suspending or revoking the registration of

these entities that violate this section or the rules promulgated pursuant to this subsection (d), including procedures for providing notice and hearing regarding the suspension or revocation of a registration certificate.

(2) No later than one hundred twenty (120) days after the effective date of this act, the program shall begin accepting applications for the operation of licensed producers, licensed processors, participating pharmacies, and regulated dispensaries.

(3) No later than one hundred eighty (180) days after the effective date of this act, the program shall provide for at least one (1) public hearing on the granting of an application to at least one (1) licensed producer, one (1) licensed processor, and one (1) participating pharmacy or one (1) regulated dispensary.

(4) No later than two hundred ten (210) days after the effective date of this act, the program shall grant at least one (1) registration certificate to a licensed producer, a licensed processor, and a participating pharmacy or regulated dispensary; provided, that at least one (1) applicant in each category meets the requirements of this chapter.

(5) After completion of subdivisions (d)(2)-(4), the program shall accept new applications during the following periods each year:

(A) January 15 through January 31; and

(B) July 15 through July 31.

(6) No later than April 15 and October 15 of each year, the program shall:

(A) Review applications received during the most recent period identified in subdivision (d)(5);

(B) Solicit public comments regarding the issuance of registration certificates to additional licensed producers, licensed processors, and participating pharmacies or regulated dispensaries; and

(C) Issue registration certificates to qualified applicants after consideration of public comments and identified and anticipated needs of the safe access program and its participants.

(e)

(1) Each application for a licensed producer or processor must include:

(A) A nonrefundable application fee paid to the program in the amount of two hundred fifty dollars (\$250);

(B) The proposed legal name and proposed articles of incorporation or charter and bylaws of the licensed producer or processor;

(C) The proposed physical address of the licensed producer or processor if a precise address has been determined, or, if no precise address yet exists, then the general location where it would be located. This also includes each location for the cultivation of medical cannabis if multiple locations are proposed;

(D) A description of the enclosed, locked facility to be used in the cultivation of cannabis;

(E) The name, address, and date of birth of each principal officer and board member of the licensed producer or processor;

(F) Proposed security and safety measures, which must include at least one (1) security alarm system for each location, a plan for deterring and preventing any unauthorized entrance into areas containing cannabis and the theft of cannabis, as well as an employee instruction manual that includes security policies, safety and security procedures, and personal safety and crime prevention techniques; and

(G) Proposed procedures to ensure accurate record keeping.

(2) Each time one (1) or more licensed producer or processor registration applications are being considered, the program shall provide an opportunity for public comment and shall solicit input from registered qualifying patients, potential patients, practitioners, and local governmental officials where the applicants would be located.

(3) Each time a licensed producer or processor certificate is granted, the decision must be based upon an assessment of the licensed producer's or licensed processor's ability to serve the overall health needs of safe access program patients and the safety of the public, including, but not limited to, the following factors:

(A) Convenience to patients throughout the state if the application were approved;

(B) The applicant's ability to provide a steady supply to the registered qualifying patients in the state;

(C) The applicant's experience running a for-profit business or nonprofit organization;



(D) The input from local governmental officials, including law enforcement officials, where the producer or processor is or will be located;

(E) The sufficiency of the applicant's plans for record keeping and security. The records shall be considered confidential information under state law and deemed protected healthcare information for purposes of the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 104-191), as amended; and

(F) The sufficiency of the applicant's plans for safety and security, including proposed location, security devices employed, and staffing.

(4) After a licensed producer or processor is approved, but before it begins operations, it shall submit the following to the program:

(A) A fee paid to the program in the amount of one thousand dollars (\$1,000);

(B) The legal name and articles of incorporation or charter and bylaws of the licensed producer or processor;

(C) The physical address of the licensed producer or processor, including each additional address used for the secure cultivation of cannabis;

(D) The name, address, and date of birth of each principal officer and board member of the licensed producer or processor;

(E) The name, address, and date of birth of any person who will be an agent of or employed by the licensed producer or processor at its inception; and

(F) A signed and notarized agreement for appropriate persons to be trained, supervised, and monitored by safe access program staff or contractors or both.

(5) The program shall track the performance of each licensed producer or processor and issue a written statement of performance to each licensed producer or processor semi-annually, as determined by the program. Licensed producers and processors shall maintain compliance with all safe access program rules and requirements at all times.

(6) Except as provided in subdivision (e)(7), the program shall issue each principal officer, board member, agent, volunteer, and employee of a licensed producer or processor a registry identification card or renewal card within thirty (30) days of receipt of the person's name, address, date of birth, and a fee in an amount established by the program. Each card must specify that the cardholder is a principal officer, board member, agent, volunteer, or employee of an entity and contain the following information:

(A) The name, address, and date of birth of the principal officer, board member, agent, volunteer, or employee;

(B) The legal name of the licensed producer or processor with which the principal officer, board member, agent, volunteer, or employee is affiliated;

(C) A random identification number unique to the cardholder;

(D) The date of issuance and expiration date of the registry identification card;

(E) A photograph, if required by the program; and

(F) Verification that the principal officer, board member, agent, volunteer, or employee has completed a criminal history records check by the Tennessee bureau of investigation.

(7)

(A) Except as otherwise provided in subdivision (e)(7)(D), the program shall not issue a registry identification card to any principal officer, board member, agent, volunteer, or employee of a licensed producer or processor who has been convicted of a felony offense under title 39, chapter 17, part 4.

(B) The program shall conduct a criminal history records check of each principal officer, board member, agent, volunteer, or employee in order to carry out this subdivision (e)(7).

(C) The program shall notify the licensed producer or processor in writing of the purpose for denying the registry identification card.

(D) The program may grant the person a registry identification card if the program determines that the offense was for conduct that occurred prior to the enactment of this chapter or was prosecuted by an authority other than the state of Tennessee and for which this chapter would otherwise have prevented a conviction.

(8) A registry identification card of a principal officer, board member, agent, volunteer, or employee expires one (1) year from the date of issuance, or upon the expiration of the registered organization's registration certificate, whichever occurs first.

(f)

(1) A licensed producer's or processor's registration certificate expires two (2) years from the date of issuance. The licensed producer or processor may submit a renewal application no earlier than sixty (60) days before the expiration of its registration certificate.

(2) The program shall renew a licensed producer's or processor's registration certificate no later than thirty (30) days after the receipt of the renewal application if the following conditions are satisfied:

(A) The licensed producer or processor submits the materials required under subdivision (e)(4), including the one-thousand-dollar fee;

(B) The licensed producer's or processor's registration certificate has not been suspended or revoked at any time for a violation of this chapter or a rule promulgated pursuant to this chapter;

(C) The advisory committee's report, issued pursuant to Section 8, indicates that the licensed producer or processor adequately provides Tennessee patients with access to medical cannabis; and

(D) The advisory committee's report, issued pursuant to Section 8, does not raise serious concerns about the continued operation of the licensed producer or processor applying for renewal.

(3) If the program determines that one (1) or more of the conditions listed in subdivision (f)(2) requires the program to suspend or revoke a registration certificate, the program shall:

(A) Provide notice and hearing to a licensed producer or processor prior to revoking a registration certificate; and

(B) Initiate an open application process to replace the operation of the producer or processor who has had a registration certificate

suspended or revoked. In granting a new registration certificate, the program shall consider factors listed in subdivision (e)(3).

(4) The program shall issue a licensed producer or processor one (1) or more thirty-day temporary registration certificates to replace the licensed producer's or processor's registration certificate scheduled to expire if the following conditions are satisfied:

(A) The licensed producer or processor previously applied for a renewal, but the program did not reach a decision;

(B) The licensed producer or processor requested a temporary registration certificate; and

(C) The licensed producer's or processor's registration certificate has not been suspended or revoked at any time for violations of this chapter or rules promulgated pursuant to this chapter.

(g) Licensed producers and processors are subject to reasonable inspection by the department of health, the department of agriculture, or the board of pharmacy, as appropriate, at any time. A department or board shall give reasonable notice of an inspection under this subsection (g). During an inspection, the department or board may review the licensed producer's or processor's confidential records, including its dispensing records, which may track transactions according to registry identification numbers to protect patient confidentiality.

(h)

(1) A licensed producer or processor shall operate for the mutual benefit of Tennessee patients. A licensed producer or processor does not need to be recognized as a tax-exempt organization by the internal revenue service.

(2) A licensed producer or processor shall not be located within five hundred feet (500') of the property line of a preexisting school.

(3) A licensed producer or processor shall notify the program no later than thirty (30) days after a principal officer, board member, agent, volunteer, or employee ceases to work at the licensed producer or processor, and the person's card shall be deemed void.

(4) A licensed producer or processor shall notify the program in writing of the name, address, and date of birth of any new principal officer, board member, agent, volunteer, or employee and remit a fee in an amount established by the program for a new registry identification card before the new agent or employee begins working at the licensed producer or processor.

(5) A licensed producer or processor shall implement appropriate security measures to deter and prevent the unauthorized entrance into areas containing cannabis and the theft of cannabis and insure that each location has an operational security alarm system.

(6) The operating documents of a licensed producer or processor shall include procedures for the oversight of the licensed producer or processor and procedures to ensure accurate recordkeeping.

(7) A licensed producer or processor is prohibited from acquiring, possessing, cultivating, manufacturing, delivering, transferring, transporting, supplying, or dispensing cannabis for any purpose except to assist registered safe access program patients.

(8) Each time a new, registered qualifying patient visits a participating pharmacy or regulated dispensary, the participating pharmacy or regulated dispensary shall provide the patient with materials designed by the program to

answer frequently asked questions and explain the limitations on the right to use medical cannabis under this chapter.

(9) Each licensed producer or processor shall develop, implement, and maintain on the premises employee and agent policies and procedures to address the following requirements:

(A) A job description or employment contract developed for all employees and a volunteer agreement for all volunteers that includes duties, authority, responsibilities, qualification, and supervision; and

(B) Training in and adherence to state confidentiality laws.

(10) Each licensed producer or processor shall maintain a personnel record for each employee and each volunteer that includes an application for employment or to volunteer and a record of any disciplinary action taken.

(11) Each licensed producer or processor shall develop, implement, and maintain on the premises an on-site training curriculum or contract with a person or entity capable of meeting employee training needs, including, but not limited to, the following topics:

(A) Professional conduct, ethics, and patient confidentiality; and

(B) Informational developments in the field of medical cannabis.

(12) Each licensed producer or processor entity shall provide each employee and each volunteer, at the time of the initial appointment, training in the following:

(A) The proper use of security measures and related procedures;

and

(B) Specific instructions on how to respond to emergencies.

(13) A licensed producer or processor shall prepare training documentation on the safe access program for each employee and have the employee sign a statement indicating the date, time, and place the employee received the training, the topics discussed, and the name and title of presenters. The licensed producer or processor shall maintain the training documentation for a period of at least six (6) months after the termination of employment or volunteer status.

(i)

(1) A registered licensed producer or processor shall not be subject to prosecution, a search, notwithstanding an inspection pursuant to subsection (g), a seizure, or a penalty in any manner or denied any right or privilege, including a civil penalty imposed or disciplinary action taken by a business or an occupational or professional licensing board or entity, solely for acting in accordance with this chapter to produce, process, or distribute medical cannabis through the safe access program.

(2) No principal officer, board member, agent, volunteer, or employee of a registered licensed producer or processor shall be subject to an arrest, prosecution, a search, a seizure, or a penalty in any manner or denied any right or privilege, including a civil penalty imposed or a disciplinary action taken by a business or an occupational or professional licensing board or entity, solely for working for or with a licensed producer, licensed processor, participating pharmacy, or regulated dispensary to engage in acts permitted by this chapter.

(j)

(1) A licensed producer shall not dispense, deliver, or otherwise transfer cannabis to any person or entity other than a licensed processor.



(2) A licensed processor shall not dispense, deliver, or otherwise transfer medical cannabis to a person or entity other than a participating pharmacy or a regulated dispensary.

(3) A participating pharmacy or regulated dispensary shall not dispense, deliver, or otherwise transfer medical cannabis other than to a safe access program qualifying patient.

(4) A person found to have violated subdivision (j)(1), (j)(2), or (j)(3) is not permitted to be an employee, agent, principal officer, or board member of any licensed producer or processor, and the person's registry identification card must be revoked.

(5) A person who has been convicted of a felony offense under title 39, chapter 17, part 4, shall not be permitted to be a principal officer, board member, agent, volunteer, or employee of a licensed producer or processor unless the program determines that the person's conviction was for the medical use of cannabis or assisting with the medical use of cannabis and issues the person a registry identification card as provided under subdivision (e)(7)(D).

(6) A person who knowingly violates this subsection (j) or knowingly fails to disclose a prior conviction in violation of subdivision (j)(5) commits a Class C misdemeanor, punishable only by a fine of one thousand dollars (\$1,000). A subsequent offense in violation of this subsection (j) is a Class B misdemeanor.

## SECTION 8.

(a)

(1) Effective November 1, 2022, there is created the medical cannabis advisory committee. The committee shall consist of thirteen (13) members, including the commissioner of agriculture, commissioner of health, and executive

director of the board of pharmacy, or their designees, who shall serve as ex officio members. The remaining members shall be appointed prior to November 1, 2022, as follows:

(A) The governor shall appoint four (4) members as follows:

(i) Two (2) members who are physicians licensed under title 63, chapter 6 or 9, who may be appointed from lists of qualified persons submitted by interested medical groups, including the Tennessee Medical Association, and who shall serve an initial term of two (2) years; and

(ii) Two (2) members who may be appointed from lists of persons submitted by interested patient advocacy groups, who shall serve an initial term of three (3) years;

(B) The speaker of the senate shall appoint three (3) members as follows:

(i) One (1) member who is a qualifying patient;

(ii) One (1) member who is a nurse, licensed in accordance with § 63-7-105, who may be appointed from lists of qualified persons submitted by interested medical groups, including the Tennessee Nurses Association, who shall serve an initial term of three (3) years; and

(iii) One (1) member representing a state or local law enforcement agency, who shall serve an initial term of two (2) years; and

(C) The speaker of the house of representatives shall appoint three (3) members as follows:

- (i) One (1) member who is a qualifying patient;
- (ii) One (1) member who is a nurse, licensed in accordance with § 63-7-105, who may be appointed from lists of qualified persons submitted by interested medical groups, including the Tennessee Nurses Association, who shall serve an initial term of two (2) years; and
- (iii) One (1) member representing a state or local law enforcement agency, who shall serve an initial term of three (3) years.

(2) In making the appointments as provided in subdivision (a)(1) the appointing authorities shall:

- (A) Consult with the interested groups represented on the committee to determine qualified persons to fill the positions; and
- (B) Appoint members with due regard to the geographical areas where qualified patients, licensed producers, licensed processors, and participating pharmacies or regulated dispensaries are located.

(b)

(1) Each appointed member shall serve a four-year term to begin November 1 and expire on October 31 of the appropriate year, unless otherwise provided in this section, and may be reappointed for successive terms.

(2) Members shall serve until a successor is appointed.

(3) A vacancy must be filled for the unexpired term with the appointment of a replacement member by the appropriate appointing authority.

(4) The pattern established for initial appointments must be followed for appointments by the appropriate appointing authorities when appointments are to fill expired terms.

(c)

(1) The first meeting shall be jointly called by the commissioner of agriculture, commissioner of health, and executive director of the board of pharmacy and held no later than sixty (60) days after November 1, 2022.

(2) At the first meeting, the committee shall elect members to serve as president, vice president, and secretary. The committee may also elect any other officers it deems necessary to perform the business of the committee. An officer will serve in that position for a term of one (1) year.

(3) A quorum of seven (7) members, including at least two (2) officers, is required for the committee to conduct business.

(d) The committee shall meet at least three (3) times per year for the purpose of providing findings and making recommendations to the general assembly regarding:

(1) Tennessee patients' access to medical cannabis;

(2) Performance of licensed producers, licensed processors, participating pharmacies, and regulated dispensaries;

(3) Practitioner participation in the safe access program;

(4) Additions to the list of qualifying medical conditions; and

(5) Research studies relevant to medical cannabis.

(e) On or before January 31 of every odd-numbered year, beginning in 2025 the committee shall report to the general assembly on its findings and recommendations.

(f) The members of the committee shall receive no compensation for their services; provided, that each member of the committee is eligible for reimbursement of

expenses and mileage in accordance with rules promulgated by the commissioner of finance and administration and approved by the attorney general and reporter.

SECTION 9. In accordance with this chapter, a person authorized by and in compliance with the safe access program regarding the manufacture, delivery, sale, or possession of medical cannabis shall not be subject to arrest or prosecution under § 39-17-417(a), § 39-17-418, or § 39-17-425, if the person's activities are in accordance with this chapter.

SECTION 10. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 4-29-245(a), is amended by adding the following as a new, appropriately designated subdivision:

Medical cannabis advisory committee, created by Section 8 of this act;

SECTION 11. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-17-417, is amended by adding the following language as a new, appropriately designated subsection:

This section does not apply to persons authorized by and in compliance with the Sherry Jones Medical Cannabis Access Act, compiled in title 68, chapter \_\_\_, regarding the manufacture, delivery, sale, or possession of cannabis for medical use.

SECTION 12. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-17-418, is amended by adding the following language as a new, appropriately designated subsection:

This section does not apply to persons authorized by and in compliance with the Sherry Jones Medical Cannabis Access Act, compiled in title 68, chapter \_\_\_, regarding the possession of cannabis for medical use.

SECTION 13. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-17-425, is amended by deleting the language "authorized by this part and title 53, chapter 11, parts 3 and 4" wherever it appears and by substituting instead the language "authorized by this part, the Sherry Jones Medical Cannabis Access Act, compiled in title 68, chapter \_\_\_, and title 53, chapter 11, parts 3 and 4".

SECTION 14. If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, then the invalidity does not affect other provisions or applications of the act that

can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to that end, the provisions of this act are severable.

SECTION 15. The commissioner of health, commissioner of agriculture, and board of pharmacy are authorized to promulgate rules, as appropriate, to effectuate the purposes of this act; provided, that the commissioner of health shall promulgate any rules necessary to effectuate the purposes of Section 8. All rules must be promulgated in accordance with the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, compiled in Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4, Chapter 5.

SECTION 16. For the purposes of appointing members of the advisory committee and promulgating rules, this act takes effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it. For all other purposes, this act takes effect July 1, 2022, the public welfare requiring it.